

Message Text

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17

ACTION EA-09

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FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5144

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR DRUG ABUSE WASHDC

UNCLAS SINGAPORE 2031

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SNAR, AMED

SUBJECT: EA AMERICAN COMMUNITY WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS

REF: KUALA LUMPUR 2110

1. I FULLY ENDORSE THE CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EAST ASIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY WORKSHOP AS SET FORTH REFTEL. HAD IT NOT BEEN FOR THE EXISTANCE OF THE SINGAPORE AMERICAN COMMUNITY ACTION COUNCIL (SACAC) AND ITS ABLE ADMINISTRATOR-COUNSELLOR ROBERT REYNOLDS, THE AMERICAN COMMUNITY WOULD PROBABLY HAVE HAD A MUCH WORSE DRUG PROBLEM THAN WE HAVE NOW AND BOTH THE EMBASSY AND THE COMMUNITY WOULD HAVE EXPERIENCED EXTRAORDINARY DIFFICULTY IN COPING WITH ALL OF THE ELEMENTS OF THE RECENT CRISIS PRECIPITATED BY CENTRAL NARCOTICS BUREAU AGAINST AMERICAN TEEN-AGERS. WE HAVE ONLY TWO CONSULAR OFFICERS AT

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THIS POST WHO MUST NECESSARILY DEVOTE FULL TIME TO PERFORMING

A WIDE RANGE OF CONSULAR SERVICES. ALTHOUGH OUR TWO CONSULS HAVE SHARED THE TASK OF ATTENDING TRIALS AND TALKING TO PARENTS AND STUDENTS WHO HAVE CALLED AT THE SECTION FOR ADVISE, THEY WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO TAKE THE PLACE OF REYNOLDS WHO HAS SPENT ALMOST EVERY DAY AND EVENING PLUS WEEKENDS TALKING TO PARENTS, AFFECTED STUDENTS AND THE CNB AUTHORITIES IN AN EFFORT TO ALLEVIATE SOME OF THE STRAINS AND PROBLEMS PRODUCED BY THIS CRISIS. (REYNOLDS FOR SOME TIME HAS BEEN CONSIDERING RETURNING TO U.S. FOR PERSONAL REASONS, BUT SACAC IS CONFIDENT IT CAN RECRUIT ABLE SUCCESSOR PROVIDED SUFFICIENT FUNDS AVAILABLE).

2. FORTUNATELY, SACAC WAS SET UP WHEN ONLY MARIJUANA AND MX PILLS WERE AVAILABLE TO TEEN-AGERS IN SINGAPORE. THUS EXTENSIVE SPORTS PROGRAMS AND OTHER ALTERNATIVE ACTIVITIES, A SUMMER EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM AND COUNSELLING SERVICE WERE ALREADY AVAILABLE AND FUNCTIONING WHEN NO. 3 SMOKING HEROIN BEGAN FLOODING THE LOCAL MARKET IN THE MIDDLE OF 1974. SACAC AND THE SCHOOL BOARD HAD ALREADY BEEN VERY ACTIVE IN 1975 IN ALERTING THE COMMUNITY TO THE PROBLEM, IN INCREASING CONTROLS AT THE SCHOOL AND IN DEALING WITH A NUMBER OF INDIVIDUAL CASES. FROM SURVEYS TAKEN BY SACAC AT THE AMERICAN SCHOOL, DRUG ABUSE IN 1975-1976 WAS SOMEWHAT LOWER THAN IN THE PREVIOUS YEAR ALTHOUGH IT IS STILL A SIGNIFICANT PROBLEM. CNB ACTION THUS OCCURRED WHILE EFFORTS WERE WELL UNDERWAY TO DEAL WITH THE DRUG PROBLEM AND IT CERTAINLY HAS HAD THE EFFECT OF STIMULATING THE SCHOOL BOARD, SACAC AND THE COMMUNITY TO TAKE FURTHER ACTION AND CONSIDER ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS. IN ANY EVENT, I AM CONVINCED THAT IF SACAC HAD NOT BEEN IN EXISTANCE THE PROBLEM WOULD HAVE BEEN MUCH WORSE AND

CERTAINLY MUCH LESS MANAGEABLE.

3. AS PARA 3 REFTTEL STATES, IT IS EXCEPTIONALLY IMPORTANT THAT USG PROVIDE SUSTAINED ORGANIZATIONAL AND DOLLAR SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAMS OVERSEAS. THE AMERICAN COMMUNITY IN SINGAPORE HAS BEEN VERY ACTIVE IN RAISING FUNDS FOR SACAC, BUT IT IS OUR CONSIDERED JUDGEMENT THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT MUST CONTINUE TO PROVIDE UNCLASSIFIED

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APPROXIMATELY ONE-THIRD OF SACAC'S TOTAL BUDGET IF THE PROGRAM IS TO CONTINUE. THIS WOULD PROBABLY COME TO AN AVERAGE PERCENT OF ABOUT \$18,000 A YEAR. EVEN WITH THIS SUSTAINED FUNDING AND SUPPORT FROM WASHINGTON AGENCIES, THE DRUG PROBLEM AMONG SINGAPORE TEEN-AGERS WILL CONTINUE (HOPEFULLY TO A LESSER EXTENT) AS LONG AS THERE IS A RESIDENT AMERICAN POPULATION OF OVER 8,000 AND AN AVAILABLE SUPPLY OF NO. 3 HEROIN AND OTHER DRUGS IN THE COUNTRY.

HOWEVER, WITH CONTINUING USG SUPPORT WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT
WE CAN LIMIT THE EXTENT OF DRUG ABUSE AND BE IN A BETTER
POSITION TO HANDLE THE INDIVIDUAL PROBLEM CASES WHICH
OCCUR.
HOLDRIDGE

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